

Gila chub
(*Gila intermedia*)

STATUS: Proposed endangered with critical habitat (67 FR 51948, August 9, 2002).

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The Gila chub is a small-finned, deep-bodied, chubby (chunky) member of the minnow family (Cyprinidae). It is dark colored (sometimes lighter on belly) with diffuse lateral band(s) that are rarely present. Adult males average about 150 mm (6 in) in total length; females can exceed 200 mm (8 in).

HABITAT: Gila chub commonly inhabit pools in smaller streams, cienegas, and artificial impoundments ranging in elevation from 609 to 1,069 m (2,000 to 3,500 ft). Common riparian plants associated with these populations include willow (*Salix* spp.), tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.), cottonwoods (*Populus* spp.), seep-willow (*Baccharis glutinosa*), and ash (*Fraxinus* spp.). Typical aquatic vegetation includes watercress (*Nasturtium officianale*), horsetail (*Equisetum* spp.), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), and speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*). Gila chub are highly secretive, preferring quiet deeper waters, especially pools, or remaining near cover including terrestrial vegetation, boulders, and fallen logs. Adults are often found in deep pools and eddies below areas with swift currents. Young-of-the-year inhabit shallow water among plants or debris, while older juveniles use higher velocity stream areas.

RANGE: Historic: The Gila chub's historic range likely included suitable habitat throughout the entire Gila River basin, except the Salt River drainage above Roosevelt Lake.

Current: Gila chub have been recorded in approximately 30 rivers, streams, and spring-fed tributaries throughout the Gila River basin in New Mexico, northern Sonora, Mexico, and central and southeastern Arizona (Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yavapai counties, Arizona).

REASON FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Approximately 85-90 percent of the Gila chub's habitat has been degraded or destroyed, and much of it is unrecoverable. Today, much of the remaining Gila chub habitat is still extensively grazed, current mining operations still operate in its watersheds, increased recreation use adds to habitat degradation, and the introduction of nonnatives adds to habitat degradation. Only 29 populations of Gila chub remain; all but one are small, isolated, and threatened.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: Fifty-nine percent of the land supporting all of the extant populations occur on Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service lands. Other ownership includes the San Carlos Apache Indian Tribe, Arizona State Land Department, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, and multiple private landowners.

Proposed critical habitat encompasses approximately 208 stream miles with the Gila River Basin. Critical habitat includes portions of the Gila, San Francisco, Babocomari, San Pedro, Santa Cruz, Upper Verde, and Agua Fria rivers, and some of their tributaries, in Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yavapai counties in Arizona. Proposed critical habitat also occurs in New Mexico.